Keeping the Beat Beyond Breast Cancer Treatment

Deep Inspiration Breath Hold (DIBH) and Radiation Therapy at the Princess Alexandra Hospital Radiation Oncology Department.

In July 2015 the Princess Alexandra Hospital Radiation Oncology Department successfully established Queensland’s first Deep Inspiration Breath Hold (DIBH) program for patients undergoing radiation therapy for left sided breast cancer.

This program utilises the Active Breathing Co-ordination (ABC) system designed by Elekta™ to precisely set the volume of air entering the lungs of patients during their radiation treatment.

When the DIBH technique is administered, the patient breathes a fixed amount of air into their lungs expanding the air gap between their treatment area (breast/chest wall) and heart.

Expanding the air gap moves the heart away from the radiation field, significantly reducing the radiation dose to the heart.

This is important because research has shown that long-term heart health after breast cancer treatment can be affected by radiation dose.

Keeping the radiation dose received by the heart as low as possible will assist in maintaining a healthy heart.

The PAH Radiation Oncology Department has also extended its DIBH program beyond breast cancer to help limit organ motion during radiation treatment of kidney, liver and chest cancers.

It is hoped that this application will further improve the accuracy of treatment and lead to a reduction in radiation side effects to organs surrounding these areas.

For further information about DIBH radiation therapy please ask your GP or Specialist about obtaining a referral for a consultation with one of our Radiation Oncologists or call us on (07) 3176 6586 during office hours.

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